

KINGSBRIDGE
URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

Report

OF THE

Medical Officer of Health
For the Year 1946



KINGSBRIDGE :

LUGGER BROS., PRINTERS, 83, FORE STREET

Kingsbridge Urban District Council

CLERK TO THE COUNCIL,

Council Chambers, Fore Street, Kingsbridge, S. Devon.

Telephone : Kingsbridge 2196.

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH,

Council Offices, Manor House, Kingsbridge, S. Devon.

CLERK TO M.O.H.

MISS MUSGRAVE, 1/1/46 to 30/9/46.

MISS ECCLES, 30/9/46.

Telephone : Kingsbridge 2004.

SANITARY INSPECTOR,

Council Chambers, Fore Street, Kingsbridge, S. Devon.

Telephone : Kingsbridge 2122.

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Annual Report

OF THE

Medical Officer of Health

For the Year 1946

Medical Officer of Health : DR. W. C. SMALES, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P.,
D.P.H.

Deputy Medical Officer of Health : DR. W. H. COWPER, M.B.,
B.CH., B.A.O.

Surveyor and Sanitary Inspector : MR. R. C. HUNT, A.R.S.I., M.S.I.A.

MR. CHAIRMAN, MISS TREEBY AND GENTLEMEN,

I beg to present my Report on the health of the district for the year 1946.

The health of the district has continued to be very satisfactory and there has been little infectious disease during the year.

The National Health Service Act, 1946, became law and provides a complete medical service free of charge for every citizen and details of its administration are at present under consideration.

STATISTICS AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE AREA.

Area (in acres)—1147½.

Population—The Registrar General's estimate of the resident population—2,973.

Number of inhabited houses (end of 1946) according to the Rate Book—919.

Number of unoccupied houses—Nil.

Rateable Value—£20,466.

Sum represented by a Penny Rate—£82. 7s. 9d.

The town of Kingsbridge is the market centre of an agricultural and highly attractive country district, and its inhabitants are mainly engaged in commerce. Unemployment has not had any prejudicial effect on the general health of the community.

The social conditions are generally favourable to health and longevity.

VITAL STATISTICS.

Live Births—Male, 23. Female, 27. Total, 50.

Live (legitimate)—Male, 20. Female, 25. Total, 45.

Live (illegitimate)—Male, 3. Female, 2. Total, 5.

BIRTH RATE per 1,000 of the estimated population—16.81.

STILL BIRTHS—Nil. Rate per 1,000 total (live and still) births—Nil.

DEATHS—38. Death rate per 1,000 of the estimated resident population—12.8.

Deaths from Puerperal Causes—Nil.

Death rate of Infants under one year of age—2.

(a) All infants per 1,000 live births—40.00.

(b) Legitimate Infants per 1,000 legitimate live births—44.44.

(c) Illegitimate Infants per 1,000 illegitimate live births—Nil.

Deaths from Cancer (all ages)—3.

Deaths from Influenza (all ages)—3.

Deaths from Syphilitic Diseases—1.

Deaths from other diseases of the Circulatory System—1.

Deaths from Bronchitis—2.

Deaths from Intra. Cran. Vasc. Lesions—3.

The conditions of occupation, and of environment, on the whole have not had a prejudicial influence on the general health or mortality.

GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES FOR THE AREA.

The Public Health Officers of the Authority are a Medical Officer of Health (also Medical Officer of Health of Plympton Rural District, Kingsbridge Rural District, Salcombe Urban District, Kingsbridge and Salcombe Port Sanitary Authority, and Kingsbridge and Salcombe Water Board).

Deputy Medical Officer of Health (occasional).

• One full-time Surveyor and Sanitary Inspector.

LABORATORY FACILITIES are provided by the County Council for the examination of milk and water in addition to the usual bacteriological examinations.

PROVISION OF ANTITOXIN—Medical men practising in the district can obtain a free supply of Diphtheria Antitoxin and Scarlatinal Serum. Material is also supplied for the immunisation of children of the district against Diphtheria free of cost.

THE SOUTH HAMS COTTAGE HOSPITAL provides 16 beds for patients from Kingsbridge and the surrounding district :

Men's Ward	6 beds
Women's Ward	6 beds
Children's Cots	2
Private Wards	2 (one bed each)

It is supported by voluntary effort.

ISOLATION HOSPITAL—None in the district, but by arrangement with the Plymouth City Council, infectious cases requiring hospital treatment may be sent to the Swilly Isolation Hospital, Plymouth.

The arrangement referred to is provisional only, pending the completion and adoption of a Scheme under Section 63 of the Local Government Act, 1929, for the provision of hospital accommodation for this part of the Administrative County, and which Scheme is in the course of preparation.

NURSING IN THE HOME—The Kingsbridge Nursing Association is doing excellent work.

MIDWIVES—The Midwives Act is administered by the County Council.

MATERNITY AND CHILD WELFARE CENTRE—There is a Centre in Kingsbridge, which is open on the 1st and 3rd Wednesday in each month. The attendance has been very good during the year.

VENEREAL DISEASES TREATMENT—At the Venereal Disease Dept., City Hospital, Plymouth. Female in-patients are also sent to St. Mary's Home, Exeter. A refund of rail or bus fare can be made in suitable cases by applying to the Medical Officer of the Centre or to the County Medical Officer.

Treatment is also available from a certain number of selected General Medical Practitioners specially approved for the purpose by the County Council, and Ministry of Health. There is one such practitioner at Modbury, and another at Kingsbridge.

ORTHOPAEDIC TREATMENT is available through the Devon Association for Orthopaedics as in-patients at Exeter and Ivybridge, and for adults at Mount Gold Hospital, Plymouth. For out-patients there is a clinic at Kingsbridge, and the South-West Clinic which deals with this district as well, held at the Mutley Assembly Rooms, Plymouth.

NOTIFIABLE DISEASES (OTHER THAN TUBERCULOSIS) DURING THE YEAR 1946.

Diseases.	Total Cases Notified.	Admitted to Hospital.	Deaths.
Scarlet Fever	2	1	—
Erysipelas	1	—	—
Whooping Cough	2	—	—
Pneumonia	3	—	—
	8	1	—

There was a remarkable absence of infectious disease in the district during the year, no cases of Diphtheria being notified, and only two cases of Scarlet Fever.

DIPHTHERIA.—I would again emphasise that in the treatment of Diphtheria, serum should be given at the earliest possible moment and preferably in one adequately large dose.

The doctor should never wait for the laboratory report before giving antitoxin if he considers on clinical grounds that the patient may be suffering from Diphtheria.

Every attempt should be made by means of bus or passenger train services, special messengers, or by personal delivery to ensure that the swab reaches the laboratory in as short a time as possible after it is taken.

It is important to obtain immediate medical advice in cases of suspected Diphtheria.

DIPHTHERIA IMMUNISATION.—Close co-operation is maintained with the Devon County Council Health Visitors. The parent of every child in the district receives a birthday card for the child when he or she reaches one year advising immunisation, the Health Visitors visit, follow up and advise ; every effort being made to get the child protected. Frequent clinics are arranged in the district. The numbers immunised during the year were as follows :

Completed.

Maintenance dose.

TUBERCULOSIS.

NEW CASES AND MORTALITY DURING 1946.

Age Periods.	New Cases.				Deaths.			
	Respiratory.		Non-Respiratory.		Respiratory.		Non-Respiratory.	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
Under 1 year	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1—5 years	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
5—15 years	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
15—25 years	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
25—35 years	1	1	1	—	—	—	—	—
35—45 years	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
45—55 years	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—
55—65 years	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
65 years and upwards	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
TOTALS	2	2	1	—	1	—	—	—

AMBULANCE.—For non-infectious cases and accidents, the John Ambulance Association provide an ambulance.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

WATER SUPPLY (Moorland Supply) from Kingsbridge and Salcombe Water Board.

The Water Supply is derived from the Kingsbridge and Salcombe Water Board, and is satisfactory in quality and quantity.

Bacteriological examinations of the raw water are made by the Water Board; seven samples of water going into supply were submitted for analysis, and were satisfactory.

No trace of lead was detected in chemical examinations of this water.

The water is chlorinated.

DRAINAGE AND SEWERAGE.—Certain aspects of this system are at present being investigated.

PUBLIC CLEANSING.—No alteration in the system, which is satisfactory in all respects.

HOUSING.—There is still a considerable amount of overcrowding, and many houses which are in a poor state continue to be used for housing families.

A contract was let for the erection of the first instalment of 30 houses at Rack Park, and building commenced on 6th August, 1946. It was hoped to complete the first pair by January, 1947, but owing to the shortage of material, principally sanitary fittings, this will not now be possible. It is probable that the first houses will not be completed and ready for occupation until June, 1947. It is estimated that the whole 30 houses will be completed by December, 1947.

FOOD SUPPLY.—Amounts of unfit foods condemned and destroyed :

Various foodstuffs—13cwts.

Various tinned foods—187 tins.

MILK.—Number of cowkeepers or dairymen on registers at end of year : Retail, 9 ; Wholesale, 5 ; Total, 14.

BAKEHOUSES.—Number in district—4.

SLAUGHTERHOUSES.—None in use, but the original three are still kept for future use.

DISINFECTIONS.—Number of houses disinfected :

Ordinary Infectious Diseases 10

Rooms and furniture are disinfected with a formalin spray.

SCHOOLS.—The three County Schools are in a satisfactory condition.

During the year one notice was received referring to nine children who were excluded from school because of communicable disease or because they were contacts of Chicken Pox.

NUISANCES.

No. of complaints received 10

No. remedied 10

No. of notices issued 5

Your obedient Servant,

W. C. SMALES,

Medical Officer of Health.